

## Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for informing a user in a GUI environment whether an output device is currently ready for printing comprising:  
determining whether the output device is ready for printing;  
providing a first indication to the user if the output device is not ready for printing; and  
providing a second indication to the user if the output device is ready for printing.
2. The method in claim 1 wherein:  
providing the first indication comprises presenting a button in a first color; and  
providing the second indication comprises presenting the button in a second color.
3. The method in claim 2 wherein:  
presenting the button comprises presenting the button on an application button bar.
4. The method in claim 2 wherein:  
presenting the button comprises presenting the button on a printer properties menu.
5. The method in claim 1 wherein:  
the method further comprises:  
receiving a status indication from the output device; and  
the determining whether the output device is ready for printing comprises utilizing the status indication.

6. The method in claim 5, further comprising:  
requesting the status indication from the output device.
7. The method in claim 1 wherein:  
providing the first indication comprises presenting a first button; and  
providing the second indication comprises presenting a second button.
8. The method in claim 1, further comprising:  
accepting a request to ready the output device for printing; and  
notifying the output device to become ready for printing.
9. The method in claim 8, further comprising:  
receiving a notification from the output device that the output device is ready  
for printing.
10. The method in claim 9, further comprising:  
providing the second indication to the user in response to receiving the  
notification from the output device that the output device is ready for  
printing.
11. A system configured to inform a user in a GUI environment whether an output  
device is currently ready for printing comprising:  
a computer instruction storage medium containing:  
a set of computer instructions for determining whether the output  
device is ready for printing;  
a set of computer instructions for providing a first indication to the user  
if the output device is not ready for printing; and  
a set of computer instructions for providing a second indication to the  
user if the output device is ready for printing.

12. The system in claim 11 wherein:
  - the set of computer instructions for providing the first indication comprises a set of computer instructions for presenting a button in a first color; and
  - the set of computer instructions for providing the second indication comprises a set of computer instructions for presenting the button in a second color.
13. The system in claim 12 wherein:
  - the sets of computer instructions for presenting the button comprise computer instructions for presenting the button on an application button bar.
14. The system in claim 12 wherein:
  - the sets of computer instructions for presenting the button comprise computer instructions for presenting the button on a printer properties menu.
15. The system in claim 11 wherein:
  - the computer instruction storage medium further contains:
    - a set of computer instructions for receiving a status indication from the output device; and
  - the set of computer instructions for determining whether the output device is ready for printing comprises computer instructions utilizing the status indication.
16. The system in claim 15 wherein the computer instruction storage medium further contains:
  - a set of computer instructions for requesting the status indication from the output device.

17. The method in claim 11 wherein:  
the set of computer instructions for providing the first indication comprises a set of computer instructions for presenting a first button; and  
the set of computer instructions for providing the second indication comprises a set of computer instructions for presenting a second button.
18. The system in claim 11 wherein the computer instruction storage medium further contains:  
a set of computer instructions for accepting a request to ready the output device for printing; and  
a set of computer instructions for notifying the output device to become ready for printing.
19. The system in claim 18 wherein the computer instruction storage medium further contains:  
a set of computer instructions for receiving a notification from the output device that the output device is ready for printing.
20. A computer readable medium containing computer instructions for:  
determining whether an output device is ready for printing;  
providing a first indication to a user if the output device is not ready for printing; and  
providing a second indication to the user if the output device is ready for printing.